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Agenda Item 5c

March 15, 2011

TO: MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH BENEFITS COMMITTEE

- I. **SUBJECT:** Colorectal Cancer Screening Project Update
- II. **PROGRAM:** Health Benefits
- III. **RECOMMENDATION:** Information
- IV. **ANALYSIS:**

This agenda item presents the results of a colorectal cancer screening pilot project performed in the CalPERS self-funded Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) Basic plan population between May 2010 and November 2010. The detailed report is found in Attachment 1, "Anthem/Quest Diagnostics/CalPERS Colorectal Cancer Screening Pilot Project Report, February 2011."

The purpose of the pilot project by Anthem Blue Cross (Anthem) and Quest Diagnostics was to increase colorectal cancer screening rates among appropriate PPO members. During the pilot project, letters were sent to 69,805 members between the ages of 50 and 65 for whom colorectal cancer screening procedures are recommended but who had not received screening according to guidelines. The letters encouraged members to request a colorectal cancer screening test kit by mail. Of the 69,805 members, 6,644 (9.5%) requested and received test kits. Among members who received a letter but did not request a kit, the main reason for not requesting a kit was the perception that they were current on their colorectal cancer screening.

Of the kits mailed to members, 3,626 (54.6%) were received for testing. The most frequent reason given for not returning a kit for testing was procrastination. Of the kits tested, 69 (1.9%) tested positive.

Anthem continues to evaluate the success of the program, with emphases on establishing the long term implications of the intervention, on formulating methods to increase participation, and on expanding application of the findings with other interested parties. For example, any possible impact of the project on the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure "Colorectal Cancer Screening" will not be known until mid-2011. Based on the additional information to be provided by Anthem, CalPERS staff will consider whether the pilot project's methodology for increasing colorectal cancer screening should be included in the self-funded PPO plans on an ongoing basis,

and whether they should be included in the health maintenance organization plans if not already present.

V. STRATEGIC PLAN:

This directly relates to Goals X and XI of the Strategic Plan which state:

- “Develop and administer quality, sustainable health benefit programs that are responsive to and valued by enrollees and employers.”
- “Promote the ability of members and employers to make informed decisions resulting in improved lifestyle changes and health outcomes.”

VI. RESULTS/COSTS:

This is an information only item.

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Attachment